

Remarks

Claims 1, 22, 39, 40 and 43 have been amended.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims 1-5, 9-16, 19-26, 30-37 and 39-43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Patton, et al. (US 6,408,301) patent in view of the Mehrotra, et al. (US 6,115,717) patent. The Examiner has also rejected applicant's claims 6, 17-18, 27 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Patton, et al. patent in view of the Mehrotra, et al. patent further in view of the Levy, et al. (US 6,505,160) patent.

Applicant has amended applicant's independent claims 1, 22, 39, 40 and 43, and with respect to such claims, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, the Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant's independent claims 1, 22, 39, 40 and 43 have been amended to better define applicant's invention. More particularly, applicant's independent claim 1 now recites an information processing method for storing a plurality of files having both binary data and metadata related to the binary data into a storage medium. Applicant's method of amended claim 1 includes an allocation step of allocating a first block storage area that is a continuous area capable of storing metadata of the plurality of files on the storage medium, a first storage step of storing the metadata of the plurality of files into the first block storage area and a second storage step of storing binary data of the plurality of files related to the metadata into a second block storage area other than said first block storage area on the storage medium. Method claim 1 further requires a third storage step of storing link information that links the metadata of the plurality of files stored in the first block storage area with the binary data of the plurality of files stored in the second block storage area, in correspondence with the

metadata, into the first block storage area, and wherein at the third storage step, each of the link information is stored into an area adjacent to an area where corresponding metadata is stored. Applicant's independent claims 22, 39, 40 and 43 have been similarly amended.

Such a construction is not taught or suggested by the cited art of record. In particular, the Patton, et al. patent teaches a system in which metadata associated with image data as well as the image data are stored. The Patton, et al. patent further teaches storing of linking data linking the metadata and image data. However, it is evident from reading the Patton, et al. patent that the patent is silent as to the particular areas of a storage medium, and their relationship to one another, that these different types of data are stored. Thus, the various passages of the patent, i.e., col. 3, lines 43-60, col. 4, lines 20-28, col. 4, lines 39-45, col. 4, lines 45-47, and col. 2, lines 23-35, and FIG. 1 of the patent, cited by the Examiner fail to support the Examiner's statement that the "'link information' must be stored adjacent with the metadata."

Moreover, there is nothing taught or suggested in the patent of allocating a first block storage area that is a continuous area capable of storing metadata of a plurality of files on the storage medium, of storing the metadata of the plurality of files into the first block storage area and of storing binary data of the plurality of files related to the metadata into a second block storage area other than said first block storage area on the storage medium.

Furthermore, there is nothing taught or suggested in the patent of storing link information that links the metadata of the plurality of files stored in the first block storage area with the binary data of the plurality of files stored in the second block storage area, in correspondence with the metadata, into the first block storage area, and wherein each of the link information is stored into an area adjacent to an area where corresponding metadata is stored.

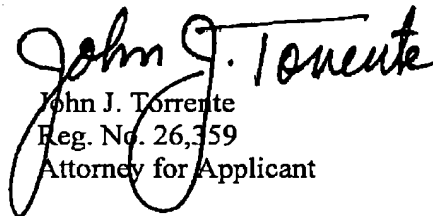
Applicant's amended independent claims 1, 22, 39, 40 and 43, and their respective dependent claims, all of which recite these features thus patentably distinguish over the Patton, et al. patent. The Mehrotra, et al. and Levy, et al. patents were cited for features unrelated to those discussed above as patentably distinguishing applicant's amended claims over the Patton, et al. patent. Applicant's amended claims, therefore, patentably distinguish over the combination of the Patton, et al., Mehrotra, et al. and Levy, et al. patents.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicant's claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

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